

Proclamation 6915 of September 9, 1996

## America Goes Back to School, 1996

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

Education is the foundation of our economy and society as we stand at the dawn of the 21st century. Education provides every American with the tools to make the most of their own lives and to seize the tremendous opportunities of economic growth and change. Education also passes along to our young people the most fundamental American values: family, responsibility, and community. To make the next century another American century—and to help all of our communities to become prosperous and strong—more parents and community members must become involved in improving our local schools and colleges. Better education is everybody's business. When families, educators, and communities work together, we can truly build a bridge to a better, stronger 21st century.

The American people want the best for their children. Our schools should be safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments where parents are involved and children can learn. Our educators and administrators should continue to aim for the highest standards of academic excellence and professional accountability. Together we must rebuild the Nation's schools for the 21st century. We must make the investments needed to allow our children to learn about the computers and technology that are the building blocks of the future. We must make college more accessible. We must expand public school choice and competition. And we must make it easier to move from school to work.

Children are our greatest natural resource: Although they are only 20 percent of our population, they are 100 percent of our future. From safe schools to better training for our teachers, from raising standards in our schools to increasing financial aid for college for middle-income and working families, from literacy for children to retraining for adults, we must ensure that all of our children get a chance to fulfill the American Dream.

I urge all Americans to be meaningfully involved in their local schools and colleges and to make a commitment to support educational improvement throughout the year. I applaud the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, a joint effort involving the Department of Education and more than 700 schools, family organizations, community groups, religious communities, family-oriented businesses, and the men and women of our Armed Forces, for sponsoring "America Goes Back to School: Get Involved!" I hope that this observance will foster grass-roots support for better education by engaging parents, educators, and community groups as active partners in strengthening schools and strengthening families. When Americans come together as a community, we can make real progress. By taking a more active role, we as a Nation will raise our expectations for both our children and ourselves.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 8 through September 14, 1996, as a time when America Goes Back to School. I invite parents, schools, community and State leaders, businesses, civic

**Proc. 6916**

**Title 3—The President**

and religious organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities expressing support for high academic standards and family and community involvement in schools and colleges, and to continue their active involvement on behalf of America's children throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6916 of September 13, 1996

**National Farm Safety and Health Week, 1996**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

Farming is an occupation, both personally rewarding and vitally important, keeping grocery store shelves stocked with affordable and healthful food products for consumers. American farmers, ranchers, and their families are dedicated to producing crops and livestock that not only feed the American people, but also have become increasingly important to the global economy.

The 2.1 million farms in the United States are predominately operated by farm and ranch families, who work long, grueling hours, exposed to hazards ranging from complicated machinery, to farm chemicals, unpredictable livestock, and variable weather. They also face danger from potentially toxic dusts and gases found in and around farm silos, manure storage facilities, and livestock confinement buildings. Workers must be constantly on guard as they face these hazardous by-products of agricultural work.

Education and training programs, including "hands-on" intensive activities, have created an awareness among farmers and ranchers that personal safety equipment is a good investment for preventing injuries and illnesses related to their work.

Linked to these safety initiatives are programs that bring about a higher level of personal health awareness. This helps to reduce the levels of noise-induced hearing loss, sun exposure-related skin cancer, and the occupational respiratory ailments prevalent among agricultural workers in the United States.

On America's farms, young people are routinely exposed to some of the same risks as adults. Their level of maturity, training, and experience should be considered when assigning chores on the farm. Since many children live on farms, safe play areas should be designated to minimize their exposure to danger.

In setting aside this special week each year to focus on the safety and health of farmers, ranchers, and their families, we demonstrate to our Nation's citizens the importance of a strong agricultural industry as we approach the 21st century.